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(54) method, system and apparatus for the production of shells of fat-containing chocolate-like masses

(57) The invention relates to a method and a system for the production of shells of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses in particular for chocolate articles, whereby an amount of liquid mass (5) is deposited into a mould cavity (3). An associated core member (11) is immersed into the mass to determine the shape of the chocolate article. The immersion time as well as the temperature of the core member is being controlled by control devices. The core member is cooled by having the top part (23) of the member arranged in a channel (22), in which temperature controlling medium is flowing, so that the top part (23) of the core member is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium. The top part may be the upper part of the core member or a separate part (23) connecting the core member with a holding device (21).

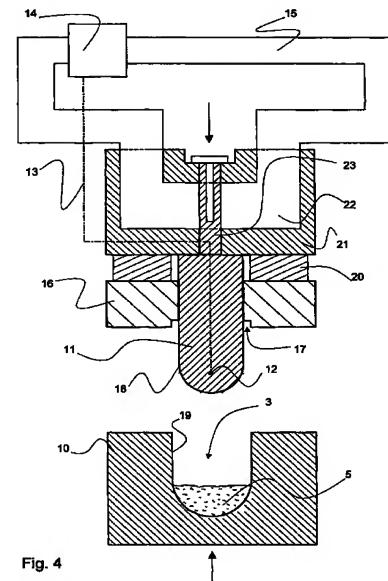


Fig. 4

Description

[0001] The present invention concerns a method, a system as well as associated apparatus parts for the production of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses, in particular for chocolate articles, by which an amount of liquid mass is deposited into a mould cavity, whereafter an associated core member is immersed into the mass, the temperature of which core member is being controlled.

[0002] Methods and Systems of the above mentioned types, as well as associated apparatuses and parts for such systems are today well-known within the prior art, and are being used extensively by the chocolate making industry.

[0003] EP 0 589 820 A1 (AASTED-MIKROVERK APS) describes the first commercially available system and associated apparatus of the introductory type for industrial use. It relates to a method, where the chocolate-like mass under crystallisation solidifies from the mould cavity and inwardly to form the outer shape of the shell, the temperature of the mould cavity being lower than the temperature of the tempered mass, that a cooling member having a temperature lower than 0 °C is immersed into the mass and kept in the mass in a fully immersed position for a predetermined period of time. The core or cooling member is furthermore immersed immediately into the mass after this has been filled into the mould cavity. The associated apparatus furthermore comprises means of controlling the up- and down movement of the cooling members, as well as controlling residence times in the fully immersed position. However, by this teaching within the technical field of the present invention the temperature control of the cooling member is performed by having channels extending through the cooling member.

[0004] Generally within the present field, chocolate-like masses are suspensions of non-fat particles, such as sugar, milk powders and cocoa solids in a liquid fat phase. The fat phase in most cases comprises an extent of the genuine cocoa butter of until around 30 %, but may comprise substitutes as well. Such substitutes may be in the form of other types of fat-containing oils. Chocolate-like masses where the cocoa butter has been replaced wholly or partly by other fats, are often named commercially as compound chocolate, in which the cocoa butter has been replaced by palm-kernel oil, are corresponding oils.

[0005] In the subsequent treatment of the ready-finished shell, the shell is frequently provided with a center mass of a creamy or liquid food material, which differs from that of the shell. Thereafter the shell is closed either with other shell parts along the periphery of the shell or by means of a coating.

[0006] Furthermore it is possible to join a produced shell with other types of shells immediately after being moulded, so that the finished food article being present as a hollow body e.g. in the form of eggs or figures, such

as pixies and the like.

[0007] Furthermore it should be mentioned, that manufactured shells do not have to consist of just one layer of material but may e.g. consist of several layers of chocolate-like material. For example one shell made of dark chocolate may be provided with an interior coating of white chocolate (or vice versa) by the same method and system even before the shell moulded first leaves the mould cavity.

[0008] The chocolate-like masses are deposited into the mould cavity in a tempered liquid state. For several decades the technique of providing tempered chocolate-like masses has been well-known to the persons skilled within the art of chocolate-making. Chocolate-like mass being heated to 40-50 °C enters the process of tempering in which the mass is cooled down to around 27-32 °C, whereby crystallisation is initiated. Thereafter, the chocolate-like mass is re-heated, normally not more than 2 °C providing the ready-tempered chocolate-like mass with a content of stable β crystals in an amount lesser than 5 %. Thereby lower melting crystals are remelted, so that only stable crystals remain in the ready-tempered mass. Such a process is for example performed by the AMK-tempering machines provided by Aasted-Mikroverk ApS, Denmark.

[0009] The quality of the ready-moulded chocolate shells has always been determined firstly by the state of the tempered chocolate mass. The skilled person knew that good flavour and mouth feeling chocolate, high gloss, high resistance to fat bloom as well as enhanced resistance to warm or heat was the consequence of the optimum tempering state, in which the liquid chocolate comprises only stable β crystals, especially small crystals before being deposited into the mould. However, before the invention of EP 0 589 820 B1 (AASTED-MIKROVERK APS), the skilled person thought that the setting of the deposited chocolate in the mould should be gentle and time consuming to an extent of often ½ - 1 hour before the moulded shell could be released from the mould cavity. By the invention of EP 0 589 820 B1 this prejudice was turned upside down, thereby discovering a method by which the deposited tempered chocolate was set rapidly e.g. typically within 10 seconds providing tremendous fast production rates for chocolate making industry.

[0010] GB 207974 (BOYD) discloses a further, and very early teaching from the beginning of the twentieth century of a proposal for the manufacturing of single shells of chocolate and by which a plunger core is cooled or warmed by making it hollow and filling it with, or circulating through it, a cooling or warming liquid.

[0011] Such plungers or core members comprising channels for the flow of temperature regulating medium are time consuming and expensive to manufacture. This certainly applies for core members having a cross section with a small width as well as for core members having a comparatively larger width.

[0012] For the smaller core members having a width

lesser than around typically 100 mm, the diameter of the channels machined are restricted and cumbersome to manufacture, as well as the obtained heat transmission effect of the circulating medium is lesser than impressive. For the larger core members, the required heat transmission effect is even higher and consequently more material has to be machined away by a cumbersome procedure for obtaining a larger width as well as length of the channels.

[0013] By the invention in question, the inventive idea comprise, that the top part of the core member is arranged in a channel in which temperature controlling medium flows, so that the core member itself is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium.

[0014] Herby cumbersome, time consuming and expensive manufacturing of channels in the core members are avoided.

[0015] The temperature of the core members are simply controlled by having the medium flowing around the top part of the core member.

[0016] The invention will be explained more fully below with reference to particularly preferred embodiments as well as the drawing, in which

- fig. 1 is a schematical view of the steps performed for reaching a packed shell product,
- fig. 2 is a schematical view of a turning point of an endless carrier for the mould elements, carried through the steps of fig. 1,
- fig. 3 is a sectional view along A-A of the mould element of fig. 2,
- fig. 4 is a lateral schematical cross-sectional view through a core member and an underlying mould cavity in which liquid chocolate-mass is deposited.
- fig. 5 is schematical view of the same in a closed position with the core member fully immersed in the mass,
- fig. 6 is a lateral, schematical, cross-sectional view through an apparatus part carrying several core members, as well as an associated underlying mould element such as of the type depicted in fig. 3, by which the cavities are now filled with liquid mass.

[0017] Steps to be performed for reaching a finished and even packed shell product is schematically disclosed in fig. 1.

[0018] Between two turning points 4 an endless carrier belt 1 normally carries mould elements 2 through the depositing section, the moulding section, the cooling section, the demoulding section and finally to the packaging section. Thereafter, the endless carrier belt 1 returns the mould elements 2 to the depositing section. The moulding elements 2 may comprise one or even several mould cavities 3, as depicted in fig. 2 and 3.

[0019] Furthermore, it should be mentioned, that the fig. 1-3 disclose, that mould elements are moved contin-

uously through the specific sections, such as the moulding section. In the moulding section, the moulding elements may be kept stationary when the associated core members are immersed, or the core members may be moved synchronously with the mould elements within the moulding section. Means for achieving such movements are well known to the skilled person within the art of chocolate making.

[0020] As described in EP 0 589 820 B1 (AASTED-MIKROVER APS) such systems comprise means for controlling the up and down movement of the core members as well as means for controlling the residence times of the core members in the fully immersed position, by the present invention especially to a predetermined time period. Furthermore, by the present invention, the residence times are typically lower than 60 seconds, though the invention is not restricted to such limitation. The residence times are more preferably lower than 20 seconds and are found to be especially expedient when between 0,1 and 5 seconds.

[0021] In the tempering section the fat-containing, chocolate-like mass is normally tempered to a temperature of around 27-34 °C having a content of stable β crystals. However, the actual temperatures as well as contents of stable β crystals depend on the choice of the skilled person for the chocolate-like mass in question. The tempered chocolate-like mass is delivered to the depositing section, in which the liquid mass is deposited into the mould cavity 3. In the moulding section to follow, a core member is immersed into the mass and the shell is actually moulded. Thereafter, a cooling section may follow, as well as a section for demoulding or parting the shell from the mould, and finally a packaging section, in which the shells are packed for delivery. The present invention is subject of the moulding section.

[0022] It should be mentioned, that in the remaining drawings of this description, it is disclosed that the tempered mass 5 already has been deposited into the mould cavities 3, 3', 3".

[0023] The first embodiment according to the invention is disclosed in fig. 4. The system comprises at least one mould cavity 3 to receive the mass 5, as well as at least one associated core member 11 to be immersed into the mass 5. For clarity only one set of a mould cavity and a core member is disclosed, but it should be mentioned, that the inventive idea may apply for several sets of mould cavities and core members as well.

[0024] Means is arranged to control the temperature of the core member 11. This means could comprise well known temperature regulation devices such as a temperature measuring sensor 12 connected via a wire 13 to a control unit 14, which controls the regulation flow of a temperature controlling medium, which circulates via channels 15, 22 through the holding plate 21 of the core member 11.

[0025] However, these temperature regulation devices may be laid out in many different ways, such as comprising refrigeration or electrical heating, as long as they

to the skilled person achieves an essentially constant temperature of the core member 11.

[0026] Important is, that by the present invention, a top part 23 of the core member 11 is arranged in a channel 22 in which temperature controlling medium flows, so that the core member itself is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium.

[0027] The top part may be an upper part of the core member itself or a separate part 23 connecting the remaining part of the core member with the holding device 21, as disclosed in fig. 4. Many embodiments of the top part may apply within the inventive idea, important is however, that the top part is essentially free of channels with the purpose of controlling the temperature of the core member as is the core member itself essentially free of such channels as well. Decisive is, that the top part is able to conduct heat or cool the remaining parts of the core member by the flow of temperature controlling medium around the top part.

[0028] Advantageously, the channel 22 for the temperature controlling medium is arranged in a holding device 21 for the core member 11. The holding device 21 controls the axial movement of the core member 11. The channel 22 extends by the disclosed embodiment horizontally through the holding device 21.

[0029] The temperature of the core member could be controlled to be equal to or lower than 0 °C, but could even be controlled to be higher than 0 °C. An especially good quality of the shells as well as fast and efficient production has been achieved, when the temperature of the core member 11 is controlled to be lower than around 10 °C. Especially excellent results have been obtained, when the temperature of the core member is being controlled to be lower than -5 °C.

[0030] Even the temperature of the mould cavity 10 may be controlled, especially to between 10 °C and 30 °C. Thereby it has astonishingly been discovered, that a smooth outer surface of the shells is obtained without having any shrinks or depressions, such as the so called "Saturn" rings.

[0031] The system may furthermore comprise mould cavity closure means, which could be in the form of a ring 16 as depicted in fig. 4. The ring 16 extends peripherally around the core member 11 and comprises shell rim moulding surfaces 17, which together with outer surfaces 18 of the core 11 and inner surfaces 19 of the mould cavity 3, determines the full geometry of the ready moulded shell 6 as depicted in fig. 5.

[0032] The cavity closure ring 16 is axially movable in relation to the core member 11. Important for the disclosed embodiment is, that the cavity closure ring 16 could be moved until secure closure with the mould cavity 3 when the core member 11 is moved into the mass and pressure is build-up in the mass 5. In this regard, the ring 16 may be suspended from the upper part of the core member 11 by means of one or several springs 20, or another type of compressible means.

[0033] However the inventive idea may apply as well

when a method is performed, by which the closure ring 16 is omitted, such that the mass is free to flow up at the upper surface of the mould cavity.

[0034] Having controlled the temperature of the core member 11 to the predetermined value, such as for example -5 °C, the core member 11 is moved downwards into the mass 5. During that movement, the mould cavity closure ring 16 engages the upper surface 24 of the mould element 10. As the ring 16 is suspended to the top part 15 of the core member 11 by a spring means 20, further downwards movement of the core 11 creates a biasing force in that spring means 20, pressing the ring 16 to a safe closure of the mould cavity 3 when the core moves further downwards.

[0035] By even further movement of the core member 11 downwards into the mass to achieve a complete filling of the enclosed mould cavity 3 with liquid mass, thereby instantaneously building up pressure in the mass. Advantageously the travelling of the core member 11 may be halted when the pressureload has reached a predetermined value, which may be controlled and read out at known control means, which is not disclosed. The fully immersed position is disclosed in fig. 5.

[0036] For the particular mould cavity 3 in question, the height of the moulded shells 6 will always be exactly the same due to the secure enclosure of the mould cavity 3 by the closure ring 16, which determines the upper position of the shell rim exactly.

[0037] By the embodiment disclosed in fig. 4 and 5 is obtained, that the biasing spring means 20 forces the ring 16 against the upper surface 24 of the mould element 10, when the core member is lifted up again from the moulded shell article. Thereby the delicate rim part of the shell 6 is still safely enclosed and properly supported when the adhesion forces are released by lifting the core 11 up and free of the shell.

[0038] Another embodiment of the invention is schematically disclosed in fig. 6. By this embodiment, the core members 24, 24' and 24" are axially movably suspended from a holding device 25, which controls the axial movements of the cores 24, 24' and 24". By the disclosed embodiment the closure means may constitute part of the holding device 25. The core members 24, 24' and 24" are guided axially in relation to the holding device 25 by means of a known type of slide guidance which comprise the top part 26 of the core members.

[0039] The suspension may typically comprise compressible spring means 27 of any kind for providing independent loadings of the core members.

[0040] The top parts 26, 26' and 26" of the core members 24, 24' and 24" are arranged in a horizontal channel 28 adapted for the through flow of temperature controlling medium. The medium may be controlled as previously explained. Especially for apparatus parts comprising more than one core member, the inventive idea has proven to be advantageous. Essentially as the

necessity of flow channels in the core members no longer apply. Great savings in manufacturing time and expenditure as well as simplicity is therefore achieved for an apparatus having a multiple of core members.

[0041] The core members as well as the top parts thereof may be manufactured of a material with a high heat transmission capability. Such materials are typically aluminum, copper, etc.

[0042] Though the top parts are depicted in fig. 6 having a width, that are somewhat smaller than that of the core members, this are in no way a restriction of the inventive idea. The width of the top parts may have essentially any size in comparison to that of the core members, it may even be larger. Important is, that the top parts are able to conduct the necessary heat or cooling to the core members for an essentially constant temperature to be maintained of those.

[0043] By the embodiment of fig. 6 an especially fast and productive system for shell making is available, yet providing an unforeseen high quality of the complete batch of shells produced.

Claims

1. Method for the production of shells of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses, in particular for chocolate articles,

by which an amount of liquid mass is deposited into a mould cavity,

whereafter an associated core member is immersed into the mass,

the temperature of which core member being controlled by the flow of temperature controlling medium, and

whereby the temperature controlling medium is brought to flow around the top part of the core member, so that the core member itself is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium.

2. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the core member is being controlled to be higher than 0°C.

3. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the core member is being controlled to be equal to or lower than 0°C.

4. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the core member is being controlled to be between -30°C and -5°C.

5. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the mould cavity is being controlled.

6. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the mould cavity is controlled to be lower than the temperature of the tempered mass.

5 7. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the mould cavity is controlled to be between 10°C and 30°C.

10 8. Method according to claim 1, whereby the core member is kept in the fully immersed position for a predetermined period of time, whereafter the core member is lifted out of the mass.

15 9. Method according to claim 1, whereby the predetermined period of time is lower than 60 seconds.

10 10. Method according to claim 1, whereby the predetermined period of time is lower than 20 seconds.

20 11. Method according to claim 1, whereby the predetermined period of time is between 0,1 seconds and 5 seconds.

25 12. Method according to claim 1, whereby a pressure-force is applied directly at the top of the core member.

30 13. Method according to claim 1, further moving a mould cavity closure means extending peripherally around the core member onto closure engagement with the mould, which closure means is axially movable in relation to the core member.

35 14. Method according to claim 1, whereafter immersing the core member even further into the mass to achieve complete filling of the enclosed mould cavity with mass in a fully immersed position thereby building up pressure in the mass by pressing the core member in direction against the mould cavity.

40 15. A system for the production of shells of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses, in particular for chocolate articles,

45 comprising at least one mould cavity to receive the mass,

50 at least one associated core member to be immersed into the mass,

55 as well as means adapted to control the temperature of the core member, which means comprise temperature controlling medium, and

wherein the top part of the core member is arranged in a channel in which temperature controlling medium flows, so that the core member itself is essentially free from channels

for the circulation of medium.

16. System according to claim 15, further comprising mould cavity closure means extending peripherally around the core member and comprising shell rim moulding surfaces, which together with outer surfaces of the core and inner surfaces of the mould cavity determines the full geometry of the ready moulded shell. 5

17. System according to claim 15, whereby the cavity closure means further being axially movable in relation to the core member, 10

18. System according to claim 15, whereby the load means are adapted to press the core member in direction against the mould cavity to achieve pressure build up in the mass. 15

19. System according to claim 15, by which the core member is connected to a holding device, which controls the axial movement of the core member. 20

20. System according to claim 15, by which the core member is axially movably suspended to the holding device. 25

21. System according to claim 15, by which the mould cavity closure means is adapted to be forced against the upper surface of the mould element comprising the mould cavity in the closing position. 30

22. System according to claim 15, by which the closure means is arranged axially movable in relation to the holding device. 35

23. System according to claim 15, by which spring means is arranged between the closure means and the holding device. 40

24. System according to claim 15, by which the closure means constitutes part of the holding device. 45

25. System according to claim 15, comprising more than one core member, by which the core members are independently suspended from the holding device.

26. Apparatus part of a system for the production of shells of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses, in particular for chocolate articles, 50

which part comprise at least one core member adapted to be immersed into the mass in an associated mould cavity, 55

wherein the top part of the core member is arranged in a channel in a holding device, and

that the channel is adapted for the flow of temperature controlling medium, so that the core member itself is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium.

27. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the top part extends through the channel.

28. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the top part extends essentially vertically through the channel.

29. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the top part has a width, which is smaller than that of the core member.

30. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the channel extends essentially horizontally through the holding device.

31. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the top part provides the connection of the core member with the holding device.

32. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the cross section of the channel is circular.

33. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the cross section of the top part is circular.

34. Apparatus part according to claim 26, wherein a temperature measuring sensor is arranged in the core member.

35. Apparatus part according to claim 26, wherein the top part of the core member is cylindrical.

36. Apparatus part according to claim 26, wherein the surface area of the top part of the core member is larger than that of a cylinder.

**Amended claims in accordance with Rule 86(2)
EPC.**

1. Method for the production of shells of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses, in particular for chocolate articles,

by which an amount of liquid mass (5) is deposited into a mould cavity (3; 3'; 3''),

whereafter an associated core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') is immersed into the mass,

the temperature of which core member being controlled by the flow of temperature controlling medium, and

whereby the temperature controlling medium is brought to flow around the top part (23; 26, 26', 26'') of the core member, so that the core member itself is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium.

2. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') is being controlled to be higher than 0°C.

3. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') is being controlled to be equal to or lower than 0°C.

4. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') is being controlled to be between -30°C and -5°C.

5. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the mould cavity (3; 3', 3'') is being controlled.

6. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the mould cavity (3; 3', 3'') is controlled to be lower than the temperature of the tempered mass (5).

7. Method according to claim 1, whereby the temperature of the mould cavity (3; 3', 3'') is controlled to be between 10°C and 30°C.

8. Method according to claim 1, whereby the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') is kept in the fully immersed position for a predetermined period of time, whereafter the core member is lifted out of the mass (5).

9. Method according to claim 1, whereby the predetermined period of time is lower than 60 seconds.

10. Method according to claim 1, whereby the predetermined period of time is lower than 20 seconds.

11. Method according to claim 1, whereby the predetermined period of time is between 0,1 seconds and 5 seconds.

12. Method according to claim 11 whereby a pressureforce is applied directly at the top on the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'').

13. Method according to claim 1, further moving a mould cavity closure means (16; 25) extending peripherally around the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') onto closure engagement with the mould (2; 10), which closure means is axially movable in relation to the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'').

14. Method according to claim 1, whereafter immersing the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') even further into the mass (5) to achieve complete filling of the enclosed mould cavity (3; 3', 3'') with mass in a fully immersed position thereby building up pressure in the mass by pressing the core member in direction against the mould cavity.

15. A system for the production of shells of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses, in particular for chocolate articles,

comprising at least one mould cavity (3; 3', 3'') to receive the mass (5),

at least one associated core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') to be immersed into the mass,

as well as means (12, 13, 14) adapted to control the temperature of the core member, which means comprise temperature controlling medium, and

wherein the top part (23; 26, 26', 26'') of the core member is arranged in a channel (22; 28) in which temperature controlling medium flows, so that the core member itself is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium.

16. System according to claim 15, further comprising mould cavity closure means (16) extending peripherally around the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') and comprising shell rim moulding surfaces (17), which together with outer surfaces (18) of the core and inner surfaces (19) of the mould cavity determines the full geometry of the ready moulded shell (6).

17. System according to claim 15, whereby the cavity closure means (16; 25) further being axially movable in relation to the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'').

18. System according to claim 15, whereby the load means (27) are adapted to press the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') in direction against the mould cavity to achieve pressure build up in the mass (5).

19. System according to claim 15, by which the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') is connected to a holding device (21; 25), which controls the axial movement of the core member.

20. System according to claim 15, by which the core member (11; 24, 24', 24'') is axially movably suspended to the holding device (25).

21. System according to claim 15, by which the mould cavity closure means (16; 25) is adapted to be forced against the upper surface of the mould element (2; 10) comprising the mould cavity (3; 3', 3") in the closing position. 5
the top part (23; 26, 26', 26") provides the connection of the core member (11; 24, 24', 24") with the holding device (21; 25).

22. System according to claim 15, by which the closure means (16) is arranged axially movable in relation to the holding device (21). 10
32. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the cross section of the channel (22; 28) is circular.

23. System according to claim 15, by which spring means (20) is arranged between the closure means (16) and the holding device (21). 10
33. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the cross section of the top part (23; 26, 26', 26") is circular.

24. System according to claim 15, by which the closure means constitutes part of the holding device (25). 15
34. Apparatus part according to claim 26, wherein a temperature measuring sensor (12) is arranged in the core member (11; 24, 24', 24").

25. System according to claim 15, comprising more than one core member (11; 24, 24', 24"), by which the core members are independently suspended from the holding device (25). 20
35. Apparatus part according to claim 26, wherein the top part (23; 26, 26', 26") of the core member (11; 24, 24', 24") is cylindrical.

26. Apparatus part of a system for the production of shells of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses, in particular for chocolate articles, 25
36. Apparatus part according to claim 26, wherein the surface area of the top part (23; 26, 26', 26") of the core member (11; 24, 24', 24") is larger than that of a cylinder.

which part comprise at least one core member (11; 24, 24', 24") adapted to be immersed into the mass in an associated mould cavity (3; 3', 3"), 30

wherein the top part (23; 28, 26', 26") of the core member is arranged in a channel (22; 28) in a holding device (21; 25), and that the channel is adapted for the flow of temperature controlling medium, so that the core member itself is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium. 35
40

27. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the top part (23; 26, 26', 26") extends through the channel (22; 28). 45

28. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the top part (23; 26, 26', 26") extends essentially vertically through the channel (22; 28). 50

29. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the top part (23; 26, 26', 26") has a width, which is smaller than that of the core member (11; 24, 24', 24"). 50

30. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein the channel (22; 28) extends essentially horizontally through the holding device (21; 25). 55

31. Apparatus part according to claim 26 wherein

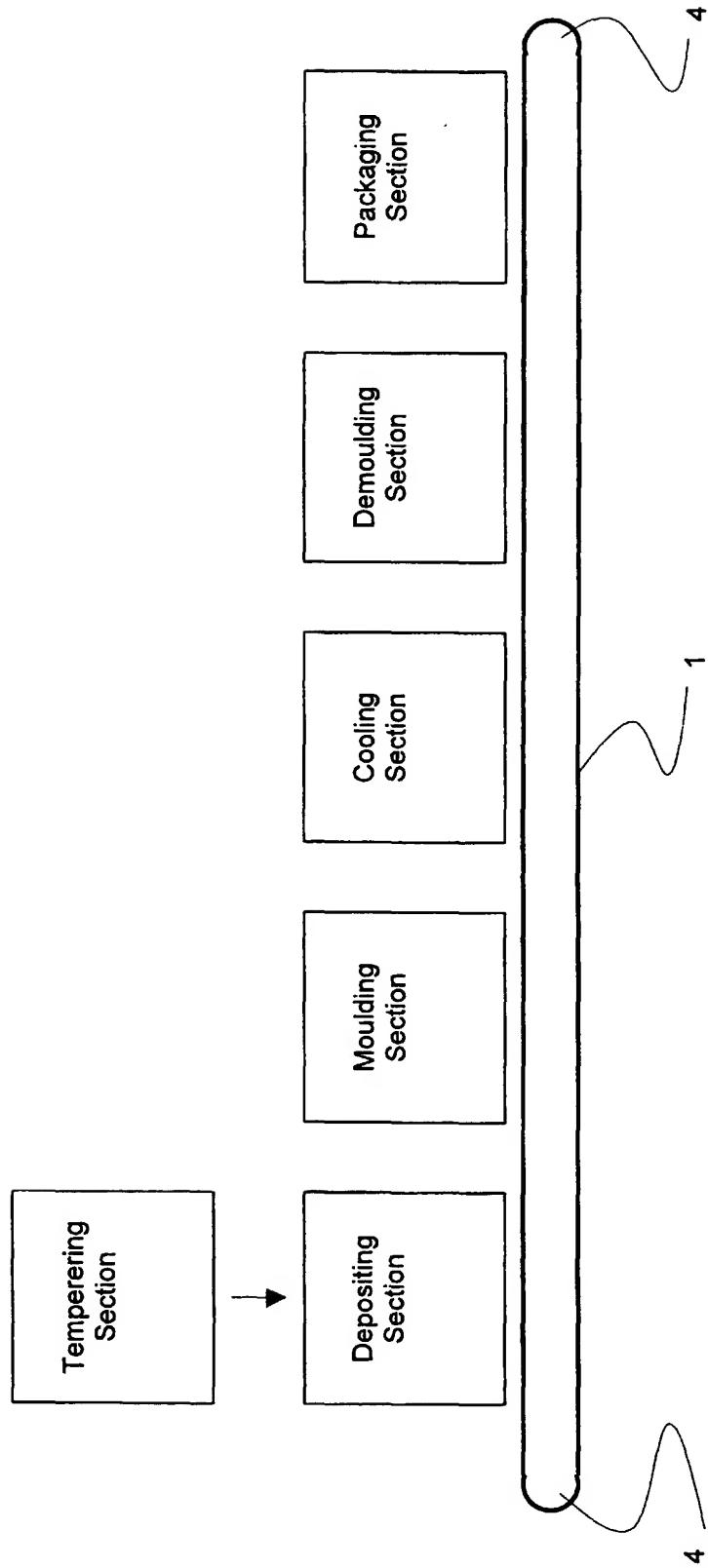


Fig. 1

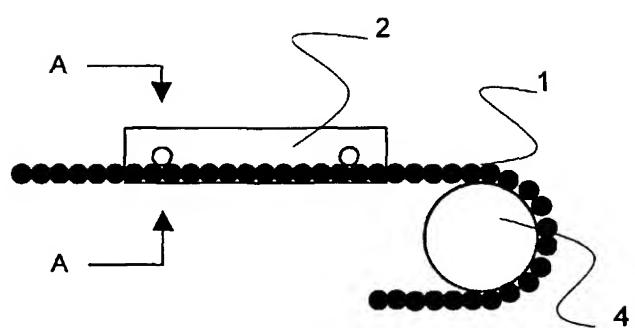


Fig. 2

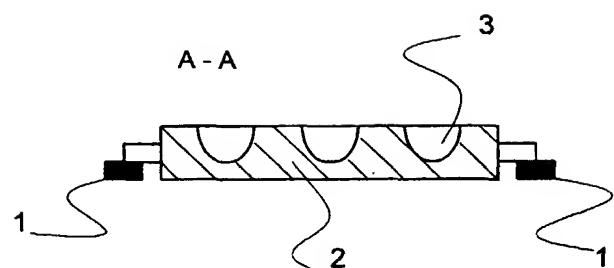


Fig. 3

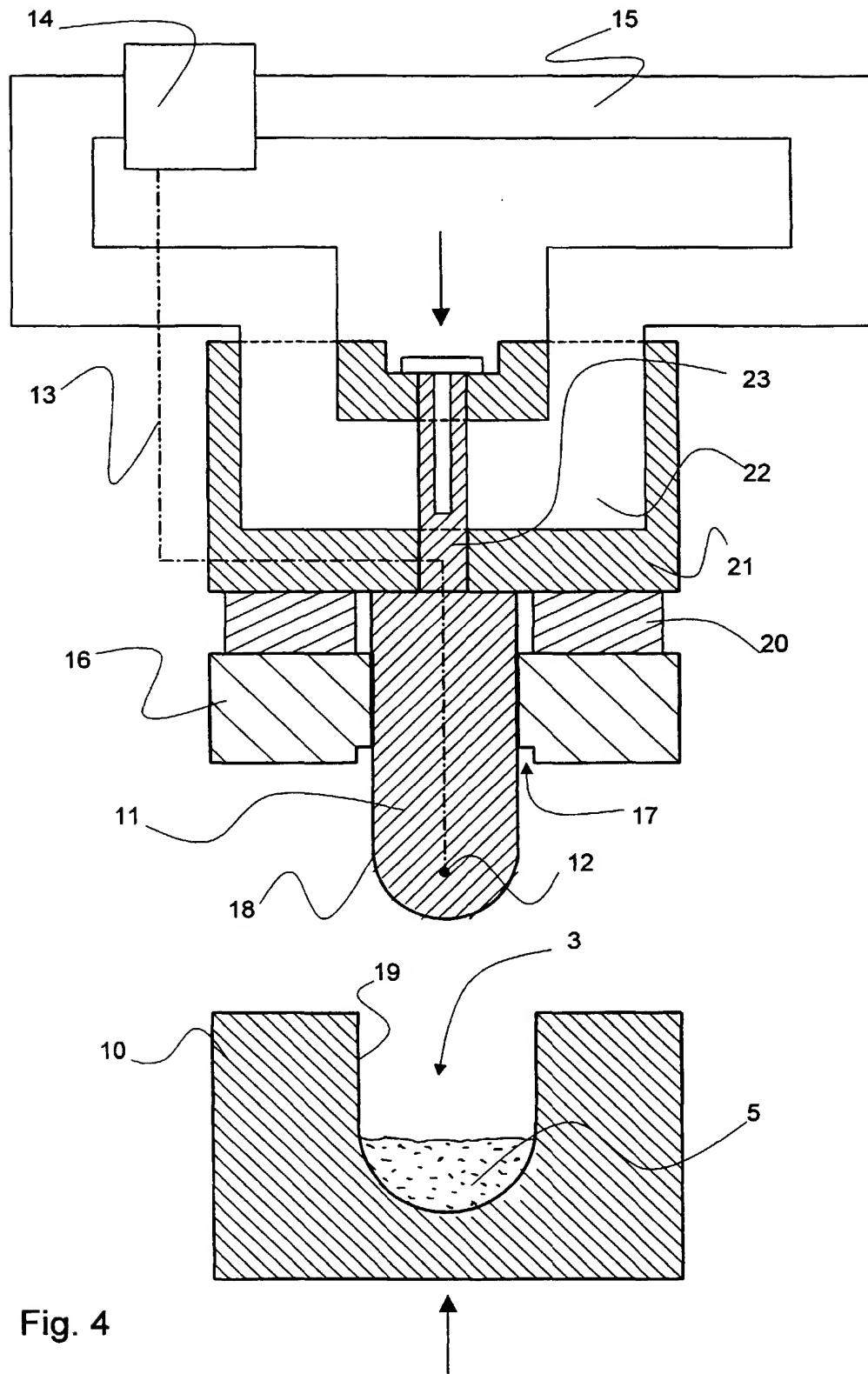


Fig. 4

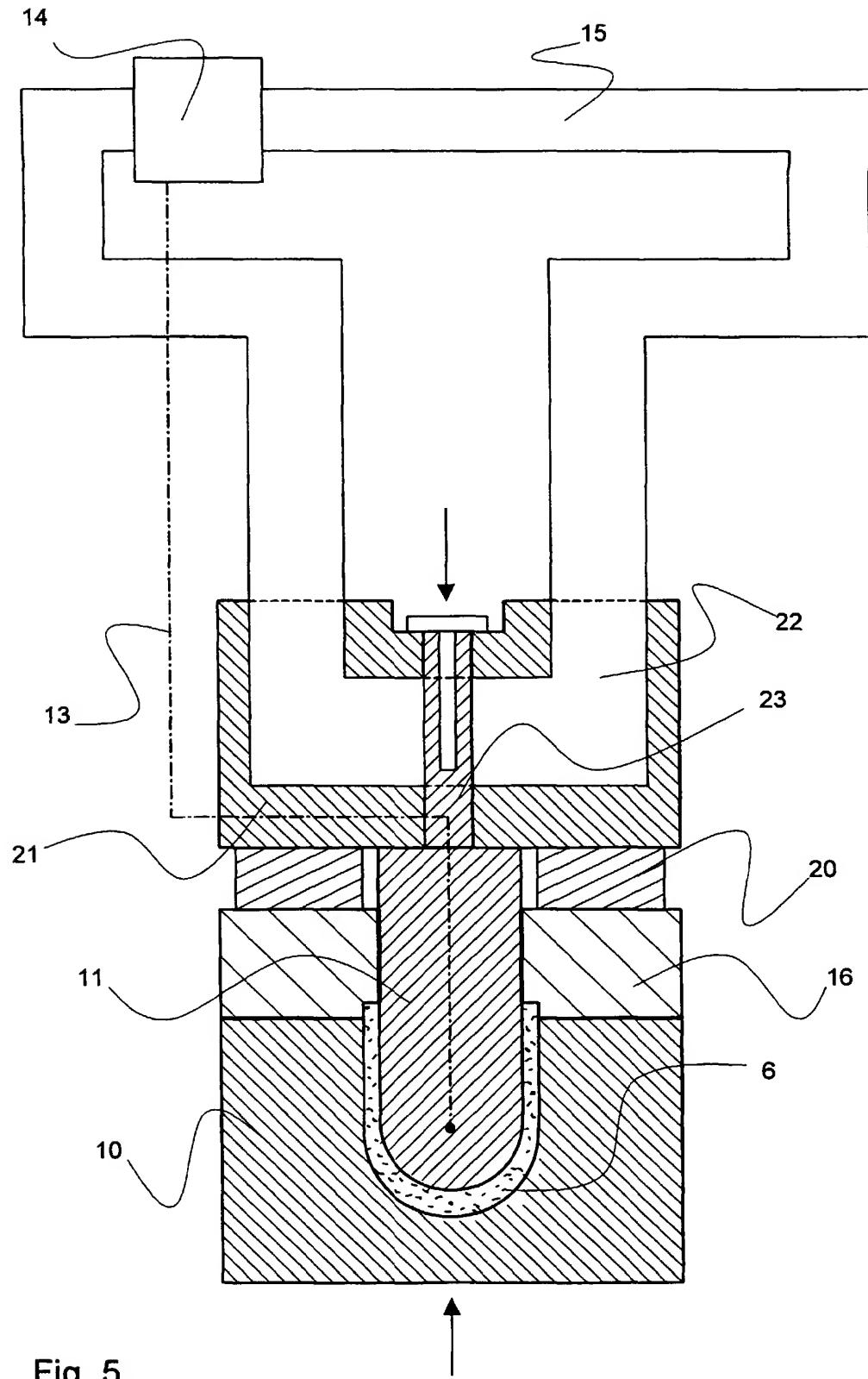


Fig. 5

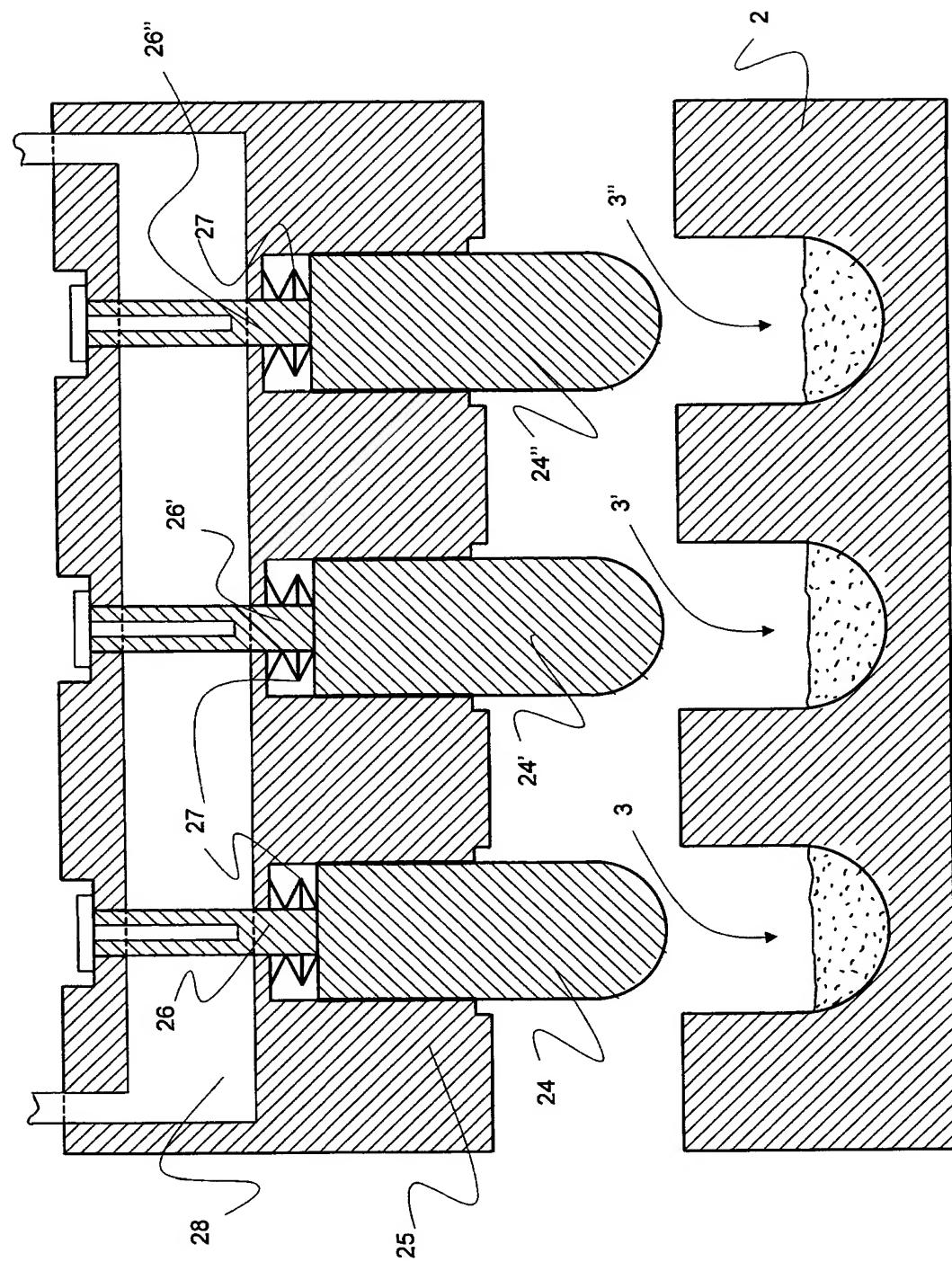


Fig. 6



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 98 20 3783

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)		
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim			
X	EP 0 715 813 A (BINDLER MASCHF GEBR GMBH CO KG) 12 June 1996 * abstract * * column 3, line 50 - line 55 * * column 4, line 50 - line 51 * * claims * ----	1,2,8, 15,26	A23G1/20 A23G1/21		
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D,A	EP 0 589 820 A (AASTED MIKROVERK APS) 30 March 1994 * the whole document * ----	1-36			
A	WO 95 32633 A (AASTED MIKROVERK APS ;AASTED LARS (DK)) 7 December 1995 * the whole document * ----	1-36			
A	US 4 426 402 A (KAUPERT GUEENTHER) 17 January 1984 * figures * * column 2, line 59 - column 4, line 23 * ----	1,15,26	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6) A23G		
A	DE 197 20 844 C (KMB PRODUKTIONS AG) 13 August 1998 * the whole document * ----	1-36			
A	WO 97 49296 A (BOYHAN LAURENCE ANTHONY ;GRADUAL PTY LTD (AU)) 31 December 1997 -----				
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims					
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner			
THE HAGUE	9 March 1999	Boddaert, P			
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS					
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document					
T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document					

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 98 20 3783

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

09-03-1999

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PUB-NO: EP000914774A1
DOCUMENT-
IDENTIFIER: EP 914774 A1
TITLE: method, system and apparatus for the production of shells of fat-containing chocolate-like masses
PUBN-DATE: May 12, 1999

INVENTOR-INFORMATION:

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ASSIGNEE-INFORMATION:

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APPL-DATE: November 9, 1998

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A23G001/21

EUR-CL (EPC): A23G001/20 ,
A23G001/20 ,
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A23G001/28 ,
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ABSTRACT:

CHG DATE=19990702 STATUS=> The invention relates to a method and a system for the production of shells of fat-containing, chocolate-like masses in particular for chocolate articles, whereby an amount of liquid mass (5) is deposited into a mould cavity (3). An associated core member (11) is immersed into the mass to determine the shape of the chocolate article. The immersion time as well as the temperature of the core member is being controlled by control

devices. The core member is cooled by having the top part (23) of the member arranged in a channel (22), in which temperature controlling medium is flowing, so that the top part (23) of the core member is essentially free from channels for the circulation of medium. The top part may be the upper part of the core member or a separate part (23) connecting the core member with a holding device (21). □